

the furloughs because we gave them that authority as part of the continuing resolution.

I would be remiss if I did not note, however, my disappointment that some of the workers at the shipyard, and others, such as those in the National Guard and at other facilities, such as the Defense Accounting Services Center in Limestone, ME, still face furloughs.

There are other important programs as well. Biomedical researchers and school superintendents are also in a quandary of having little or no flexibility to implement the sequestration targets.

Instead of enacting piecemeal fixes—whether it is the FAA or it is the meat inspectors—our bill would empower administrators to head off this problem and avoid indiscriminate spending cuts. We can mitigate the harmful effects of sequestration, protect jobs, and avoid mindless spending cuts while tackling the very real problem of excessive and unnecessary spending by simply allowing managers to distinguish between vital programs, to be creative, and to cut those that are of lesser importance.

I know my colleague from Colorado would agree that no business facing the need to cut expenses would ever treat every program and function and service of that business as if they were of equal worth. Instead, the business managers and executives and employees would evaluate all the programs and set priorities. That is all we are asking.

I thank the Senator from Colorado, my good friend Senator UDALL, for his strong partnership on our effort to protect the jobs of hard-working Americans, prevent arbitrary spending cuts, yet deal with an unsustainable \$16.8 trillion debt. We know our approach would go a long way toward allowing priorities to be set. After all, if we are not going to set priorities, to make the tough decisions and distinguish among absolutely vital programs and those that could be cut or eliminated, then we might as well go home and just have a computer apply a formula to the budget.

That is not why we are here and that is not what the American people expect. They expect us to exercise judgment and make good decisions.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I believe our time has expired or is beginning to expire, but I wish to underline what Senator COLLINS has said. We are passionate about this. Some say a passionate problem solver is an oxymoron or a passionate moderate is an oxymoron. That is not the case here. We want to solve this. We both have private sector experience. This is not how you would run a concern in the private sector. We can do this. We have shown we can do this. Let's move forward and provide certainty, not just to the Federal agencies but to the people in this country. At a time of tough economic challenges with a fragile recovery underway, we

need to create more certainty and need to budget in a wiser, smarter way.

I thank the Senator from Maine for her leadership. I value our partnership, and I know we are going to see this to a successful conclusion.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, could the Presiding Officer inform me of whether there is an order to proceed right now or whether there is some additional time for morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 4 minutes remaining for the majority in morning business.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Maine be recognized for 4 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### IRAN

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I understand that Senator BALDWIN is on her way to make her maiden speech, and I promise I will stop talking the moment she enters the Chamber. I thank my colleague from Colorado.

Later today, the Senate will vote on a resolution that has been introduced by Senators MENENDEZ and GRAHAM. I am pleased to join my Senate colleagues in cosponsoring this resolution, which reaffirms our commitment to a strong U.S.-Israeli relationship and to preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear power.

At this time in our history, it is more important than ever that we demonstrate a firm commitment to our allies—even if the neighborhood they are in looks more like a tinderbox than it has in decades. This resolution reaffirms that the United States will be a reliable friend and a determined ally, even in dangerous times—indeed, especially in dangerous times.

We are at a critical juncture in our efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapons capability. During my time in the Senate, I have repeatedly supported legislation imposes sanctions on Iran and puts pressure on the regime to change course. I worked with my good friend former-Senator Lieberman to pass legislation which ensures that organizations that inspect commercial ships for the U.S. government are not also providing services to governments like Iran that sponsor terrorism.

This resolution reiterates the significance that we place on keeping the full force of sanctions on Iran.

In the face of an existential threat to our country, the American people would expect the U.S. to take action. This resolution says that we will support Israel's right to do the same.

Let me read the powerful language in the resolution. Congress "declares that the United States has a vital national interest in, and unbreakable commitment to, ensuring the existence, survival, and security of the State of Israel, and reaffirms United States support for Israel's right to self-defense."

Congress "urges that, if the Government of Israel is compelled to take

military action in legitimate self-defense against Iran's nuclear weapons program, the United States Government should stand with Israel and provide, in accordance with United States law and the constitutional responsibility of Congress to authorize the use of military force, diplomatic, military, and economic support to the Government of Israel in its defense of its territory, people, and existence."

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in the United States Senate as well as with President Obama to close the loopholes in current sanctions legislation and to ensure that the cooperation that has existed between the United States and the State of Israel for over 60 years remains steadfast and unshakeable.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin is recognized.

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for as much time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MOVING FORWARD

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, as I make my first remarks on the Senate floor, I have the honor of occupying the same Senate seat, and in fact occupying the very Senate desk, once used by Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Sr. "Fighting Bob LaFollette," as he was known, was a Republican Senator from Wisconsin a century ago who is credited as the founder of the Progressive Party and progressive movement in this Nation. I admire Fighting Bob's legacy in many ways. But I wish to assure my colleagues who are present in the Chamber at this moment that I will not emulate his maiden speech, which went on for 3 successive days.

Bob LaFollette ran for this office because he was concerned that while corporate interests were being well served in Washington, ordinary people weren't even being heard. He traveled all around the State of Wisconsin, literally speaking from makeshift stages of soap boxes and hay wagons at county fairs. His message came to define my State's progressive tradition. The things he talked about in that day still ring true.

As I have traveled the State Wisconsinites have told me that the powerful and well-connected seem still to write their own rules while the concerns and struggles of middle-class families go unnoticed in Washington. They believe our economic system is tilted toward those at the top and that our political system exists to protect those unfair advantages instead of making sure everybody gets a fair shot.

They see Washington happy to let Wall Street write their own rules but unable to help students pull themselves out of debt. They see Washington working to protect big tax breaks for powerful corporations but unwilling to protect small manufacturers from getting ripped off by China's cheating.